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NORTH AMERICAN AIR DEFENSE COMMAND

**W O I R**

**WEEKLY INTELLIGENCE REVIEW (U)**

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WIR 12/65  
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19 March 1965



# NORAD

Issue No. 12/65, 19 March 1965

## The WIR in Brief

Weekly  
Intelligence  
Review

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### Space

COSMOS 59 DE-ORBITED AFTER USUAL 8 DAYS

Probably photoreconnaissance vehicle.

COSMOS 60 PROBABLY A LUNAR-PROBE FAILURE

Launched near optimum time while "launch window" was open.

COSMOS 61-62-63 LAUNCH APPARENTLY A REPEAT OF 2 PREVIOUS TRIPLE LAUNCHES

Possibly communications-related. Soviets say they will pave way for future manned flights.

Portion identified  
as non-responsive  
to the appeal

COVER: Soviet MRBM in erected position (from Red Star) (OFFICIAL USE ONLY)  
NOTE: Pages 26, 28, 29, 32, 33, 36, 37, 40, 41, and 42 of this issue are blank.

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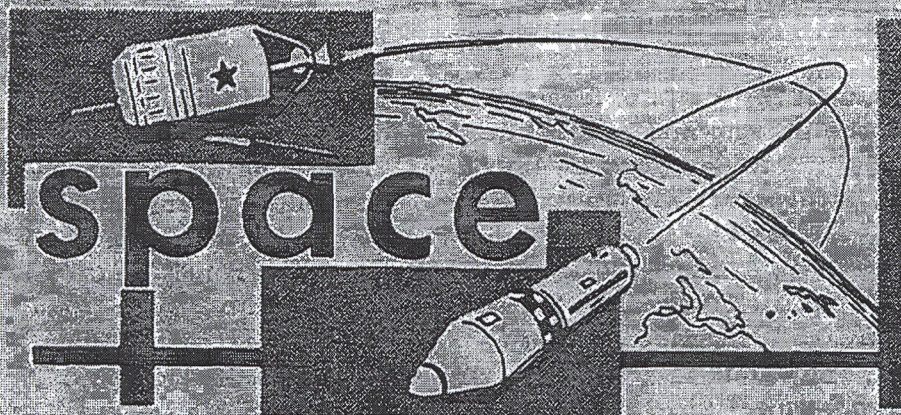
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significant  
intelligence  
on space  
developments  
and trends

### Cosmos 59 De-orbited After Usual 8 Days

Cosmos 59, which was launched from Tyuratam at about 0900Z, 7 March 1965, followed the recent prevailing pattern of recoverable Cosmoses by being de-orbited at about 0710Z, 15 March, on Revolution 127, after almost 8 days in orbit. Most of the recoverable Cosmoses launched from Tyuratam last year were recovered on the 126th-128th Orbit, nearly 8 days after launch.

Cosmos 59, like most of the other Tyuratam-launched recoverable Cosmoses, is believed to be a photoreconnaissance vehicle which could also perform other tasks as secondary missions.

(SPADATS; NORAD)

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### Cosmos 60 Probably a Lunar-Probe Failure

Cosmos 60, which the Soviets launched from Tyuratam at about 0926Z, 12 March, is believed to have been a lunar probe which failed. This estimate contradicts the Soviet announcement, issued about 4 hours after launch, that the vehicle was another in the Cosmos series of spacecraft which have been exploring near-Earth space.

Cosmos 60 probably was intended to explore the near surface of the Moon -- now at maximum illumination -- either by means of Ranger-type photography prior to impact, or by soft-landing on the Moon an instrumented package which would transmit data on the nature of the lunar surface. The latter mission might also have included photography, before and/or after landing.

Reasons for believing that Cosmos 60 was to be a lunar probe:

- Launch occurred while the launch "window" was open for a probe of the near side of the Moon (11-12 March). (See p. 11, WIR 10/65).

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- Launch occurred within 5 minutes of the optimum time for a launch of a lunar probe -- assuming use of the parking-orbit technique, which has been used for all lunar-launch attempts since 1961.
- The orbit had all the parameters of a parking orbit. It was lower and more nearly circular than the orbits of most of the recoverable Tyuratam-launched vehicles.
- Telemetry was similar to that of other Soviet lunar and interplanetary launches.

Orbital elements of Cosmos 60 have been announced as follows:

|             | <u>By SPADATS</u>            | <u>By TASS</u>               |
|-------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Inclination | 64.75 degrees                | 65 degrees                   |
| Period      | 88.97 minutes                | 89.1 minutes                 |
| Apogee      | 270 kilometers<br>(145 n.m.) | 287 kilometers<br>(154 n.m.) |
| Perigee     | 188 kilometers<br>(100 n.m.) | 201 kilometers<br>(104 n.m.) |

**50X1 and 3, E.O.13526**

The vehicle, judging by propulsion [redacted], appears to have been launched by the usual SS-6 ICBM booster-sustainer and injected into orbit by the heavy Venik third stage. The use of the Venik is consistent with the estimate that the launch was intended to be a lunar probe (all Soviet parking-orbit vehicles have involved use of the Venik) but is not a weighty piece of evidence by itself, since the Venik is increasingly being used for missions in which the parking orbit is not used. The latter include many apparent photoreconnaissance vehicles, the manned Voskhod, its precursor (Cosmos 47), and certain other test or precursor vehicles, including the recent Cosmos 57.

The lunar-probe mission appears to have failed when the probable fourth stage failed to ignite after attaining parking orbit. This mishap has caused the failure of a number of lunar and interplanetary probe attempts. (Another cause of failure has been explosion or disintegration of the vehicle when the fourth stage did ignite.)

The vehicle undoubtedly would have been named a Lunik if it had achieved its mission, or, possibly, even if it had merely been injected into transfer trajectory in the general direction of the Moon, as was the case with Lunik 4 in 1963. The Cosmos name was probably used to satisfy UN reporting requirements without disclosing the true nature of the vehicle. The Soviets have frequently resorted to this subterfuge during the past 18 months to conceal failures, vehicles with classified missions (such as photoreconnaissance), and test and precursor vehicles for which the assignment of distinctive names would not be warranted.





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The launch window for a lunar probe of the near side of the Moon will next be open 9 and 10 April.

After the April window, the constraints for this type of Soviet lunar launch will probably prevent another Soviet attempt until late fall 1965.

(SPADATS; various ELINT sensors; TASS; NORAD)

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## Cosmos 61-62-63 Launch Apparently A Repeat Of 2 Previous Triple Launches

The simultaneous launch of Cosmoes 61, 62, and 63 by a single carrier rocket from Tyuratam at about 1100Z, 15 March, apparently was a repetition of two previous triple-payload launches:

- Cosmoes 38, 39, and 40 -- 18 August 1964.
- Cosmoes 54, 55, and 56 -- 21 February 1965.

All were launched from Tyuratam and injected into orbits of nominal 56-degree inclinations. The average altitudes of the 15 March and 21 February payloads were very similar but were about twice as high as those of the 18 August payloads.

TASS said that the 3 payloads were participating in the Cosmos scientific research program and were part of a series designed to prepare for future manned space flights. NORAD believes that all 3 triple-payload launches may have been connected with development of a space communications-relay system, which could be related to future manned flights.

Parameters have been announced for all 3 vehicles as follows:

|             | <u>By SPADATS</u>              | <u>By TASS</u>                 |
|-------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Inclination | 55.88 degrees                  | 56 degrees                     |
| Period      | 106.9 minutes                  | 106 minutes                    |
| Apogee      | 1840 kilometers<br>(990 n.m.)  | 1837 kilometers<br>(988 n.m.)  |
| Perigee     | 331.5 kilometers<br>(178 n.m.) | 273 kilometers<br>(147.4 n.m.) |

TASS announced that the vehicles were transmitting on frequencies of 19.775, 20.084, and 90.377 mc/s -- [REDACTED]

The propulsion system has not been identified but apparently is not the SS-6 ICBM booster-sustainer which normally is used to launch space vehicles at Tyuratam. The Soviets said last August that a single booster of a new type had been used to launch Cosmoes 38, 39, and 40. [REDACTED]

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The rocket body used in the 15 March launch apparently broke up during the late part of Revolution 3 or the early part of Revolution 4. As of Revolution 6, the Navy SPASUR fence had detected 52 pieces instead of the single rocket body.

The triple-payload launches of 18 August and 21 February were followed 5-10 days later by the launches of Cosmoes 44 and 58, which seemed also to be associated with development of a space communications system and with the antecedent triple payloads. Cosmoes 44 and 58 had 65-degree inclinations and, respectively, average altitudes of about 450 and 350 n.m. If these two vehicles were related to the triple payloads which preceded them into space, then launch of another vehicle similar to Cosmoes 44 and 58 should be executed shortly.

(SPADATS; various ELINT sensors; NORAD)

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